

4th Sunday of Easter A Cycle homily

Good Shepherd Sunday

Famous passage from the 10th chapter of John's gospel

I am the good shepherd

I am the gate

The shepherd's life was a demanding one.

No branding of the sheep as on cattle today.

The sheep recognized the shepherd's voice.

Remember the old vinyl records? Remember what was on the RCA label? It was a dog looking at an old phonograph.

Scene was entitled: "The Master's voice".

Today's challenge: listening to Jesus' voice in the midst of all the competing voices and sounds demanding our attention, many challenging our values, morals, and beliefs.

There are extremist groups and political parties

There are challenges to fidelity to marriage or to the truths of the Gospel message.

In the middle of all these voices is the voice of the Good shepherd speaking through his word and his Church.

This weekend in the United States alone the Word of God is proclaimed in 20,000 Catholic pulpits.

100,000 masses are offered.

The good shepherd is calling for a deeper, more honest and more productive spiritual life.

Key Question: are we listening to the voice of the good shepherd?

Are we truly engaging with him?

Maybe we just need to try Jesus.

Many joined at the O'Hair Park clean up yesterday. (125 volunteers; the park was cleaned before we started, so we focused on the neighborhood.)

Maybe we just need "to try Jesus" and his care for all creation.

(Tell the story how Renee Walker welcomed the Muslim family who has moved into the neighborhood.)

Maybe we just need to try Jesus' way of living

(Tell the story of how an anonymous person made a donation of \$200,000 for outreach center in Farmington Hills at the site of the former St. Alexander's parish.)

Maybe we need to just try Jesus' Way of caring for others in need.

People truly listening to the voice of the Lord in prayer by coming faithfully to mass and praying at home.

Maybe we need to just try Jesus and his way of prayer as a way of being close to his father.

Today's gospel reminds us that there are two voices speaking to us in our world.

The voice who come to rob and steel and rape and rob us of our dignity as sons and daughters of God.

And the voice of Jesus, the good shepherd, who lays down his life for us.

(Pause)

We need to engage Jesus today and follow the example of the Good Shepherd.

I believe this is a big part of the challenge with people embracing roles of service in the Church: whether that be priesthood, religious

life, deaconate or lay ministry. We need to first experience Jesus. The Good Shepherd, and then want to give ourselves fully spread good news of his love to all creation.

All of us need to encourage those among us to just choose Jesus and the challenge of spreading His good news.

And so, I say to one and to all this day,

trust the Good Shepherd

Listen to the master's voice.

Open your heart daily to his call

Trust in the Lord.

Yes, my brothers and sisters, Just Try Jesus!